

Colonnade Park
Name of Property

Essex, New Jersey
County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Colonnade Park

Other names/site number: Colonnade Apartments/Pavilion Apartments

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 23-59 Clifton Avenue (the Colonnade)
108-136 Martin Luther King Boulevard (Pavilion I)
138-162 Martin Luther King Boulevard (Pavilion II)

City or town: Newark State: NJ County: Essex
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

x national x statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A x B x C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date:

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒☐

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District

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

3

Noncontributing

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / multiple dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / multiple dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement / International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Glass, Metal

Narrative Description

*(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)*

Summary Paragraph

The Colonnade Park, including three International Style residential buildings designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and completed in 1960, is located immediately adjacent to the northern edge of Newark's Central Business District, north of Interstate 280, east of Clifton Avenue, south of Seventh Avenue, and west of the intersection of Broad Street and Broadway. Conceived as "a city within a city," twin buildings known as Pavilion Towers are next to the city's Broad Street thoroughfare, and the large "double" building known as Colonnade Tower faces the majestic Branch Brook Park. The three 22-story aluminum-glass high-rises provide 1,240 apartments on a 23.5-acre site. The immediate surrounding area has New Jersey's highest concentration of historic landmarks. It is the only residential work ever constructed in the eastern states that was personally designed by Mies van der Rohe.

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Narrative Description

Mies' Colonnade Tower, with its reflective glass skin, majestically stands above the treetops of Olmsted's Branch Brook Park in the west. Downhill toward the east, 1,500 feet away, the two Pavilion Towers are perpendicularly oriented, but face each other with 500 feet apart. The narrower sides of the two rectangular structures are positioned next to Broad Street, Newark's historic artery since 1666. Looking back toward the west, the massive Colonnade Tower commands a dramatic scene on the top of the elevation, with two Pavilion Towers symmetrically spaced on its two sides. Now, without the eight Columbus Homes high rises in-between, Maestro Mies' vision has become ever more pronounced in these three 22-story rental buildings.

A rectilinear prism, the Colonnade Tower measures 446 feet by 66 feet in 22 by three equally squared bays with 560 apartments. (It is Mies' most expansive structure.) Each of the Pavilion Towers is 214 feet by 66 feet in 10 by three bays with 340 apartments each. Each tower is a compact mass, symmetrical unto itself, framed by four corners that have a particular aesthetic earlier revealed at IIT, and "turned" by the now iconic assembly of two wide flanges at the centerlines and an eight-inch angle welded between. These towers were built with reinforced concrete columns to reduce costs, while a skin of glass and prefabricated aluminum moderated the buildings' temperature swings.

Mies' impeccable craftsmanship and superb selection of materials present three massive high-rises, clad in skins of glass and anodized aluminum components. Serving only as mullions, but not structural support or bay frames, these slimmer natural-colored aluminum I-beams blend well with gray-tinted glass to create a more austere and graceful impression. Some "mullions" cover the structural columns, a unique treatment which, as Mies explained, aesthetically aims "to preserve and extend the rhythm which the mullions set up in the rest of the building." All towers have four windows per bay, yielding a lofty vertical appearance from a distance. Beneath the windows, which cannot be opened, are cast-aluminum screens that protect a recessed housing for natural ventilation and individual air conditioning units.

The ground floors are approximately 16 feet in height and equal to two stories. The glass walls that enclose the lobbies are set back approximately 20 feet from the towers' perimeters. Exposed structural columns stand free from the exterior walls at the ground-floor level. This typical Miesian touch highlights the columns' supportive function yet also creates an impression of open, flowing space with the massive glass towers suspended overhead. The ground floor of the Colonnade Tower has three brick masonry service and stair cores far back in the center of the structured grid. Its two separate but mirror-imaged lobbies suggest the "double" building's spatial configuration.

All towers have apartments in studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom sizes. The Colonnade Tower has, in addition, 40 three-bedroom apartments. As is typical with Mies, the elevators,

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stairs, and service shafts are aligned along a central access corridor. Kitchens and bathrooms are away from window walls and toward the centers. The floor plan creates a spacious feeling from inside and large glass expanses of consistent outside appearance. For every apartment, Mies' design promises "a fourth wall of magnificent metropolitan views." For those east-facing apartments, the fourth wall is a framed Manhattan skyline under the sun or the moon.

The Colonnade Park was landscaped by Alfred Caldwell, an architect, poet, philosopher, and dreamer who deplored most urban renewal projects made up of "enormous boxes, tier on tier, ten stories high," which would merely re-create the slums they were supposed to replace. He said, "Tall buildings should be placed far apart in the landscape with both parks and one story houses in the space between." Once the failed towers of Columbus Homes were torn down, what replaced them in the large expanse between Colonnade and Pavilion Towers was a set of two-story garden apartment buildings and a green plaza in front of St. Lucy's Church. Caldwell would have liked this, though his design would have planted only the sycamore trees here, trees that still survive around the edges of the space. In addition, flowers and greenery now cover the graceful earth berms around Colonnade Tower. The three-acre strip next to Broad Street was made lower than the adjacent lots because Mies intended it to be the site of a one-story commercial building in the IIT style, and he did not want this building to obstruct the view from the ground floor of Pavilion Towers. There are also sloping parking lots that soon were expanded and ringed with chain-link fence; these recall the city's worst years, when tenants felt under siege.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture
Community Planning & Development
Social History

Period of Significance

1949 - 1967

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Herbert Greenwald

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Herbert Greenwald

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph *(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)*

The Colonnade Park possesses exceptional importance in the 20th century social history of Newark, urban planning and development, and Modernist architecture. Designated *UR NJ 2-13* under Title 1 of the 1949 Housing Act, the district has the distinction of being New Jersey's first urban renewal project and one of the first in the nation. Through an effort of over 10 years, involving planning, court cases, State and Federal legislation, and a number of developers, the Colonnade Park came to fruition in 1960. The immediate surrounding area has New Jersey's highest concentration of historic landmarks, including Plume House (c. 1725), State Street School (c. 1845), House of Prayer (c. 1850), Branch Brook Park (c. 1895), Sacred Heart Cathedral Basilica (c. 1898-1954), Newark Broad Street Station (c. 1903), and St. Lucy's Church (c. 1926), all of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The 20th century's most influential architect, Mies van der Rohe, collaborated with the legendary developer Herbert Greenwald to create iconic buildings, such as the 860-880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments in Chicago, the Seagram Building in New York City, and Lafayette Park in Detroit. Upon Greenwald's death in a 1959 air crash, Colonnade Park became their last collaboration and Mies' only residential project in the eastern United States.

Narrative Statement of Significance *(Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)*

Social History of a City in Decline

Newark's industrial productivity and its growing population peaked right before the Great Depression. In 1930, the city's retail power counted for over thirty percent of the entire state of New Jersey. The boom of the wartime economy and a full employment in manufacturing and transportation were followed by a prolonged economic depression in the 30's. After a short wartime economic prosperity, the end of World War II immediately led to Newark's severe economic challenges. For instance, the 1947 city budget deficit reached \$70 million, facing investment shortages in streets, hospitals, and schools. The urgent infrastructural needs for the seaport and the airport reached over \$45 million. While the postwar industrial transformation put strains on traditional manufacturing, the urban population decline was exacerbated by a severe deteriorating housing stock. Between 1929 and 1950, only 5,000 housing units were added by the private sector, compared 26,000 between 1921 and 1928.

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To face the challenge, Newark called for city planning by Harland Bartholomew, who started his career in Newark in 1912 as the nation's first full-time city planner, and who obtained national prominence with over 500 municipal plans throughout the country. Through his 1947 master plan, the city placed the seaport and airport under the Port of New York Authority to reduce Newark's municipal investment burden. By focusing on a massive urban renewal plan to battle deteriorating infrastructure and substandard housing, the city hoped to effectively retain middle class residents from suburban flight. The master plan identified the 60-acre area of the old First Ward north of the Central Business District, including the current Colonnade Park, as one of the most prominent urban renewal districts, with the highest concentration of dilapidated tenements.

The storied Old First Ward, a.k.a. Newark's Little Italy, emerged from an old quarry as an Italian immigrant neighborhood. By the end of World War II, the once vibrant district of 1,362 families included some of the city's worst tenements. Over 90 percent of them had no private toilets, 76 percent lacked central heating, 54 percent lacked private baths, and 50 percent had no hot water. The Newark Chamber of Commerce and Mayor Vallani's "fact-finding" report faulted not only irresponsible landlords, but also the "slum life-style" of residents who threw garbage from windows and piled refuse in backyards. Since few objections were raised, Newark's Italian-American Mayor, his administration, and the Old First Ward's church and community leaders led the residents to reach a "consensus" -- "Slums, a social evil, must go."

Colonnade Park in the Context of Urban Renewal

The Housing Act of 1949, one of the most significant urban renewal legislations in American history, was born out of unique historic circumstances that resulted from decades of economic depression and war. The nation looked forward to a bright future by raising living standards and rebuilding decaying cities. Newark's dynamic leaders in the housing field prepared all legal work ahead of the Housing Act's passage and successfully fought for federal funding. The Executive Director of Newark Housing Authority, Louis Danzig, then became actively involved in federal legislation. As the man who had been largely responsible for revising Title VII of the Housing Act, he valued large-scale housing that would attract investment by insurance companies such as Newark-based Mutual Benefit Life Insurance and Prudential Insurance. The city swiftly prepared land for an estimated \$40 million housing development which included the future Colonnade Park site.

Between 1953 and 1954, Newark's reform-minded civic, labor, and business leaders initiated a whirlwind campaign for city charter change and civic reform. Catching the nation's attention, the reformers aimed to overhaul Newark's outmoded, graft-ridden administration to deliver efficient public services, stabilize the tax rate, attract fresh investment capital, and most urgently, keep business and the middle class in the city. Among reform supporters, the president of Mutual Benefit Life Insurance, W. Paul Stillman, a Newark booster, believed in the city's future with a change of government. Leo Carlin, the reformers' candidate, became the first mayor under the new mayor-council city government in May 1954 and called for a "New Newark" movement for the city's renewal. Despite their previously planned moves out of the city, leading businesses

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such as Mutual Benefit Life, Prudential, and Public Services (later P.S.E.&G.) expanded their presence in the city with new corporate headquarters which literally changed the city's downtown skyline.

Within a decade of the passage of the Housing Act, it became clear that it was not adequate to its goal of revitalizing cities. It was marred by simplistic and often contradictory approaches, particularly in Title I, which called for public-sponsored private housing efforts and funded Newark for slum removal. Meanwhile, the forces in real estate and building industries, which President Truman called "the real estate lobby," steadily intensified their assaults against public initiated housing projects by constantly amending the Housing Act to create an increasingly impoverished public housing clientele. In Newark by the end of 1957, over 5,000 low-rent apartments had been built on an unprecedented scale, such as Kretchmer Homes (780 dwellings), Walsh Homes (630 apartments), Hayes Homes (1,458 apartments), and, in the future Colonnade Park site, Columbus Homes with 1,556 apartments. As signs of deterioration multiplied in the low-rent public housing projects, the private investment that had been intended to prevent an exodus of the middle class became stalled by the increasingly stringent stipulations attached to government mortgage guarantees. The Broad Street-Branch Brook Park site, which had not secured a private investor, cost a public write-down loss of \$6 million under Title I of the 1949 Housing Act and a current local tax loss of \$176,000 annually. The city encountered a staggering challenge to deal with its "unmarketable" land, which was at risk of coming to resemble the infamous "Hiroshima flat" of St. Louis or the "ragweed acres" that marred Detroit before Lafayette Park was built. But as long as middle-class construction was stalled, it was agreed to call a moratorium on further low-income construction, for the prospect of revitalizing the city was starting to dim.

Enter Greenwald and Mies

A few days before Christmas 1957, Newark Redevelopment Corporation, a New Jersey based private company, announced its withdrawal from a long-planned \$17,620,000 middle-income housing and commercial project on the Broad Street-Branch Brook Park site because of its inability to obtain financial support in loan guarantees from the Federal Housing Administration. Facing this serious setback, Mayor Leo Carlin called an emergency Newark Housing Authority meeting and immediately started a whirlwind effort to secure a new private developer. The city solicited development plans from the powerful New York developer William Zechendorf and his nationally prominent Webb & Knapp, Inc., which assembled the properties for the construction of the U.N. building, and the J. P. Webster Corp. of Wood-Ridge, which had worked with various Newark projects. Newark-based Mutual Benefit Life Insurance brought in the Metropolitan Corporation, through which MBLI had invested in a number of significant projects in Chicago. These had included the Apartments at 860-880 Lake Shore Drive, where signature designs by the architectural titan Mies van der Rohe had raised the standards for modern residential construction. The visionary developer Herbert Greenwald and Mies' long-time design confidant Joseph Fujikawa, who directed Mies' "developer work," scheduled a year-end site inspection, followed by a telegraphed construction offer between \$17 million and \$20 million. By December 27, 1957, the city chose Herbert Greenwald and Mies van der Rohe for Newark's first

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private development project under Title I, which became the first and the only major residential project by Mies in the East. Greenwald described the redevelopment, "What has been provided here is that truly great architecture and really advanced construction concepts can be brought to the large segment of the population who heretofore had to get out of town to get the kind of comfortable and gracious living they want."

On November 1, 1958, the city broke ground for the Colonnade Park, ending two decades of construction lethargy and starting the city's hopeful resurgence as a residential community. Mayor Carlin led the cheer for a "New Newark" after a strenuous effort resulting in a partnership which he described in these words: "Private enterprise will build on a site cleared and made available as a public undertaking; like private automobiles on public roads, each is essential to the other." In a poignant symbol of cultural aspirations, the 72-year-old Mies presented to the mayor a coin from ancient Athens.

In the night of February 3, 1959, American Airlines' Electra, Flight 320, crashed in the East River, killing 65, including Herbert Greenwald, the energetic builder of "the city of tomorrow." His untimely death meant that several of Mies's designs for New York City would never be realized, and the project that had been begun at Lafayette Park in Detroit would be passed off to one developer after another, and its design would suffer greatly as a result. It was a key moment in the regeneration of American cities, and the forces of social deterioration appeared very strong: after Greenwald's death, therefore, Newark watched nervously to see how the construction at Colonnade Park would turn out.

The Impact of Colonnade Park

On January 16, 1960, the first two Colonnade Park apartments of what had been conceived as a "city within a city" opened for visits by curious apartment applicants from the region. Curators of decorative arts from Newark Museum filled one apartment with classic furniture to show the versatility of Mies' modern design. The new project was hailed for showing the potential of modern design to create a desirable urban habitat, and all over the nation's 13th-largest city, residential construction increased its pace and would soon start to reverse the significant population loss of recent years. Among massive redevelopments, six apartment structures of 14 to 21 stories rose in the Prospect Hill section and six in the Weequahic Park section, with the tallest one of 21 stories. Thousands more middle-class apartments were built by some nationally prominent companies such as Parker Construction Inc. in the downtown's Hallmark Houses, in the Ivy Hill section, and in the North Ward Spiral Gardens. Together, they prevented a worse middle-class flight in Newark's history and provided what was then, and remains to this day, a large part of the city's housing stock. Mies' three buildings alone, however, have stood the test of five decades' time thanks to their visionary design and carefully-supervised construction.

Urban renewal failed in Newark, as everywhere else. Planners were no match for the private financial interests that Truman had called "the real estate lobby." All the public housing that was built during that era has since been demolished, along with five thousand private apartment units built during the same time. The eight twelve-story towers of Columbus Homes (which were

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located in the middle of Mies's three building) were the first to deteriorate and the first to be torn down (in 1994). But Mies's work still stands, and it is a monument to both architectural greatness and the constraints that limit social change. Mies himself understood these constraints. He observed in 1959, "We have to know that life cannot be changed by us. It will be changed. But not by us. We can only guide the things that can cause physical change."

Mies van der Rohe, Architect

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe has long been considered one of the most important architects of the 20th century, and his significance to the field of modern architecture is beyond dispute. In Europe, before World War II, Mies emerged as one of the most innovative leaders of the modern movement, producing visionary projects for glass and steel and executing a number of small but critically significant buildings. In the United States, after 1938, he transformed the architectonic expression of the steel frame in American architecture and left a nearly unmatched legacy of teaching and building. Already in 1932, while Mies van der Rohe was still living in Germany, the architect was canonized by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in their seminal book, *The International Style*, in which they declared: "The four leaders of modern architecture are Le Corbusier, Oud, Gropius and Mies van der Rohe." Sigfried Giedion's equally seminal, *Space, Time and Architecture*, first published in 1941, summed up the architect's significance in the following words: "If later investigation is made as to which of the architects of our period have best understood how to link a continuously flowing interior space with the shaping of precisely limited forms, Mies van der Rohe will appear as the clearest exponent of the inherent volition of our period." In 1961, a symposium held at Columbia University named Mies van der Rohe as one of the "Four Great Makers of Modern Architecture," together with Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright. Since that date, the number of academic studies on Mies van der Rohe and his work has expanded exponentially. Mies van der Rohe's students and followers continue to teach and practice all over the world. The term 'Miesian' is now even used to describe a general type or style of architecture derived from his work, a use recognized by the National Register of Historic Places.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe began his career in Europe, becoming one of the pivotal leaders of the architectural avant-garde by the early 1920s. Born in 1886 in Aachen, Germany, Mies van der Rohe had his most important early apprenticeship in the offices of Peter Behrens between 1908 and 1911. From Behrens, whose work for the AEG factory combined classical refinement with exposed steel columns and expansive glazing, Mies van der Rohe learned many of the elements that would characterize his architectural transformation of industrial materials. He was equally influenced in this period by the work of the Dutch architect, Hendrick Berlage, whose structural rationalism and fidelity to the nature of his materials Mies adapted to his own work. After World War I, Mies van der Rohe joined the utopian artists of the Novembergruppe and founded the avant-garde magazine *G(estaltung)*. His earliest work in this period experimented with architectural expressionism, with all its romantic and visionary qualities. Around 1920, Mies designed several projects for glass skyscrapers in central Berlin, in crystalline, vertical facets of glass and suspended floor planes, just as German expressionists, such as Bruno Taut

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and Hugo Häring, were calling for a revolutionary architecture of transparency and organicism. After 1923, Mies van der Rohe's style shifted, and he came heavily under the influence of Dutch neo-plasticism and Russian suprematism. The former influence, along with the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, drove Mies to experiment with independent walls and ceilings arranged in an open, pin-wheeling manner. The latter influence drove Mies to consider the reduction and abstraction of these elements into dynamic and contrapuntal compositions of pure shapes in space. These experiments culminated in one of Mies van der Rohe's most significant works, the German Pavilion built for the Barcelona World Exposition in 1929. Commonly known as the Barcelona Pavilion, this small, temporary structure with no long-term purpose, has since become one of the most recognized objects in the architectural history of modernism, composed mainly of a raised terrace and a simple rectangular structure with eight cruciform columns.

In terms of leadership and education, Mies van der Rohe was equally significant in the development of modern architecture. In 1927, he directed the building of the Weissenhofsiedlung, one of the most influential model housing developments of the period, bringing together architects from many parts of Europe, including Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius. In 1930, Mies succeeded Hannes Meyer as director of the Dessau Bauhaus, remaining in that position until the Bauhaus was forcibly closed by the National Socialist government in 1933. Less overtly political than many of his fellow modernists, Mies attempted to remain in Germany for a short period, finally emigrating to the United States in 1937, when it had become clear that his architecture would have no place under the Nazi dictatorship.

After his arrival in the United States in 1937, Mies van der Rohe went on to significantly change the American architectural landscape, particularly during the rebuilding that immediately followed World War II. It was in the United States that Mies had his most prolific period, both in terms of the number of projects he was able to build and in terms of the number of followers and disciples he influenced, either directly or indirectly. During this period, he transformed what had been primarily a pragmatic construction technique for large buildings--the steel frame--into a refined art form in which the steel itself became one of the primary expressive elements. At the same time, he monumentalized his abstraction of space, moving away from the dynamic, pin-wheeling forms of his 1920s works, and returning to a more severe classicism, with cubic volumes, often raised over carefully paved plazas and asymmetrically balanced against surrounding buildings. Such classicism, however, was interpreted in a radically modernist manner, with the transparent walls and continuous ceiling planes extending sight lines beyond the interiors, in the attempt to represent infinitely receding space. Following a trip to Wyoming in 1937, Mies van der Rohe designed a house for a rural site, the unbuilt Resor house, whose rectangular form would have bridged a small stream. Soon afterwards, he accepted a position as head of the architecture department at the Armour Institute of Technology, soon to be renamed the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). At his inaugural lecture as director of the department in 1938, Mies stated: "In its simplest form architecture is rooted in entirely functional considerations, but it can reach up through all degrees of value to the highest sphere of spiritual existence into the realm of pure art." This sentence summarized what had become Mies van der Rohe's consistent approach to design: To begin with functional considerations of structure and

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materials, then to refine the detailing and expression of those materials until they transcended their technical origins to become a pure art of structure and space.

In 1939, he began preliminary designs for the campus of Illinois Institute of Technology on the south side of Chicago. Its composition of low-slung rectangular buildings, arranged as subtly juxtaposed figures on a cleared urban site, would constitute one of the most important examples of modernist urban design. After World War II, Mies would become perhaps the most significant designer of American skyscrapers, transforming the common steel frames of such structures into subtle expressions of module, proportion and detail. Buildings such as 860-880 Lake Shore Drive in Chicago (1948-51) and the Seagram Building in New York (1958) have become canonical monuments of modernism and are studied by scholars and architects all over the world. This later American work of Mies van der Rohe has been used to define what has commonly become known as the "Miesian" style. Its elements most typically include: the expression of steel-frame construction through exposed steel-flange columns; the careful expression of joints and details; free-standing internal walls; uninterrupted ceiling planes; the use of continuous, machine-tooled surfaces of a single material; and the use of large glass panes on the exterior to produce a transparency of enclosure. Less typically, this style involves the expression of a concrete frame construction, or the solid filling of external walls in brick. Here too, however, the same minimalist aesthetic and attention to details apply.

Mies van der Rohe believed that the form of a building must be a clear expression of its structure, or construction. The structure must incorporate what he called the "civilizing force" of technology—that is, it must reflect the "driving and sustaining forces" of its time. Mies' extensive use of steel, glass, and reinforced concrete in the later stages of his career, as evidenced in his Colonnade Park buildings, reflected his belief that these were the most expressive materials of modern technology. The clarity and simplicity of the interior features of his buildings—for example, the townhouses' open steel staircases—are also the result of his concentration on structure and his exclusion of anything not directly related to it.

Mies' first realized high-rise was Chicago's Promontory Apartments, a 22-story concrete-framed building that was the result of his initial collaboration with Herbert Greenwald. In his second collaboration with Greenwald, Mies not only fulfilled visions of glass skyscrapers he had harbored since the 1920s, but also made architectural history; the 26-story 860 and 880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, erected on Chicago's north side between 1948 and 1951, were the first high-rise apartment buildings built almost entirely of glass and steel. Steel was used both in their framing and on their skins. In 1953, again working with Greenwald, Mies designed the two 27-story buildings of the Commonwealth Promenade Apartments in Chicago. The construction methods used in these buildings--reinforced concrete framing and glass and aluminum skins--were more economical than those used at 860 and 880 Lake Shore Drive. Moreover, because aluminum is lightweight and can be easily extruded, it provided a means of housing individual air conditioning units (a feature lacking at 860 and 880 Lake Shore Drive) along a building's perimeter. The Commonwealth Promenade Apartments thus became the model for Mies' later apartment buildings, including the Colonnade and Pavilion Towers in Newark--to which they bear a very strong resemblance.

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A Legacy

Architectural literature has not taken much notice of Colonnade Park. But the place embodies an idealistic vision of Mies van der Rohe, one that Herbert Greenwald's support enabled him to make tangible: *Great architecture need not be the exclusive privilege of the rich*. If it could be implemented in Newark, it can be implemented anywhere, with no corner-cutting, no cheapening, no dumbing-down. This is the message of Colonnade Park, and it is why Colonnade Park should be cherished and preserved.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Name of Property

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

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|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (*Describe the boundaries of the property.*)

Colonnade Park adjoins the northern edge of Newark's Central Business District, north of Interstate 280, east of Clifton Avenue, south of Seventh Avenue, and west of the intersection of Broad Street and Broadway.

Boundary Justification (*Explain why the boundaries were selected.*)

Original footprint of the development.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Zemin Zhang
organization: Newark Preservation and Landmarks Committee
street & number: 23 James Street
city or town: Newark state: NJ zip code: 07102
e-mail: zeminzhang23@yahoo.com
telephone: (973) 643-4104
date: August 1, 2014

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of ____.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.